

**Present:** Heather Lamb, Lynn Madden, Tara Bray, Jamie McFadden, Dave Falkevitch, Lori Kiesman, Monica Madden, Alastair McFadden, Rev. Kathy Platt (Supervising Minister), Dianne Kowalchuk

**Regrets:** Sheila Deforest

Chair Heather Lamb called the council meeting to order at 7 pm. Before Kathy Platt opened the meeting with a prayer, she asked the council members to introduce themselves. The minutes of the December 12, 2023, meeting were reviewed. **\*\*Moved by Jamie McFadden, seconded by Lynn Madden, that the minutes of the December 12, 2023, council meeting be accepted as circulated. Carried.**

**Business arising from the minutes:**

- There was no offering at the Service of Lessons and Carols.

**Correspondence:**

- Letter from Prairie to Pine Region appointing Kathy Platt as Supervising Minister.
- Thank you and receipt from Westman Youth Choir.
- Letter and agreement from Assiniboine North Parent Child Coalition.
- Letter from Jordan Cantwell, Growth Animator, United Church of Canada.
- Letter from Rivers Kids Club
- Letter from Jamie McFadden re: Don McFadden bequest of \$35,000.
- E-mail from Irene Chabluk, Committee for Community of Faith Support
- E-mail from Sheila Deforest re: Zoom workshop *Social Media for the Rural Church*
- Letter from Riverdale Municipality re: levy for police costs

**Reports**

**Spiritual Leadership:** The committee met on February 27, and Tara Bray reported the following:

- Tara will remain as Chair and look after banners and pulpit supply. Jocelyn Beever will remain as Secretary. Greg Kowalchuk will look after ushers and updating the roll. Megan Forsythe will look after Communion servers and share Communion setup with Tara.
- Holy Humour Sunday will be April 14<sup>th</sup>, with more info to come.
- Sheila will be off April 7<sup>th</sup>, May 12<sup>th</sup> and June 16<sup>th</sup>. Her last Sunday is June 23<sup>rd</sup>, so we would suggest that be our last service of the year. We suggest closing for July and August as we have in the past.
- Sundae Sunday will be June 9<sup>th</sup>.
- Communion will be served on April 21<sup>st</sup> and June 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- We suggest that a donation be made to the Bear Clan.
- There was positive feedback for having Communion including the children in February and we hope we can do that annually.
- We could use some resources to replace *Seasons of the Spirit*. Members of the LST Committee like *Feasting on the Word* series. We have 5 out of the 12 books; we would suggest that the board purchase the remaining books.
- The baptism of Burke McFadden was approved by the committee, date to be set.
- The committee has agreed that Leslie McFadden may perform the funeral for Hal Sveistrup.
- Carberry United Church has a couple of lay worship leaders-in-training willing to come to Rivers.
- Next meeting is May 7<sup>th</sup>.

**Outreach:** The committee met on January 22. Lori Kiesman reported the following:

- Valentine cards were sent to members of the church family whom we haven't seen for awhile.
- When the weather is warmer, we plan to do a cookie-drop-off visit with older members.
- Dave is getting a list of members who donate to M&S, and Sheila will send out thank you cards. (It was noted at the council meeting that out of RUC's 56 identifiable givers, only 13 give to M&S.)
- We hosted lunch after the *World Day of Prayer* service held in our church on March 1.

- Cyndi Price and another representative from the Brandon Bear Clan spoke at church on February 25.
- Sheila led a workshop on prayer beads for Lent on February 12 and 13. Extras were made for those who wished to have them.
- The committee is asking that it be noted in the bulletin in advance that the annual reports can be e-mailed out if requested.
- We discussed how to do a closing prayer: Name God, state what you are grateful for, make a request, and conclude.

**Ministry and Personnel:** Lynn Madden reported the following:

- Sheila is taking holidays and study leave as follows: March 11-19 (Learning Circle, Saskatoon); May 9-14 (Convocation, St Andrew's College, Saskatoon); June 13-18 (ordination, Saskatoon); June 25-30. This uses up Sheila's Study Leave; she has two days of holidays remaining which she is saving for May when her new grandchild is born.
- The committee will be meeting with the inside caretaker.

**Trustees:** Dave Falkevitch had no report.

**Prairie to Pine Region:** Dianne Kowalchuk reported it had recently been noted in the regional newsletter that hate mail has been received by Affirming churches.

**Pastoral Relations:** Dianne reported the following:

- After Sheila informed us that she will not be staying with us following her ordination, I contacted Judy Hare, Pastoral Relations Ministry, to find out about the process going forward. I attended a Zoom Community of Faith Profile Workshop on February 24<sup>th</sup>. At this gathering, I informed Judy that we would like to continue as an SME position. If we are looking for a half-time candidate, we can hire only a half-time candidate. If we have no luck as an SME, we can go back to the PRC and say that we want to look at a collaborative arrangement. In a collaborative arrangement for a fulltime position, we would be eligible for an "Admissions" person. If we cannot find a suitable collaborative arrangement, we can ask the PRC to grant us an exception to the part-time posting ban. (But that doesn't mean that a halftime minister would be knocking at our door.)
- Dave and I suggest that we go ahead with a posting for a student, and while we wait to see if that bears fruit, we could be in conversation with other churches about a collaboration.
- The paperwork for the posting would include the position profile, the terms, and our Living Faith story, as well as the Financial Viability Review and a recent financial statement. We have revised our last profile, set of terms, and Living Faith Story. Jamie and Monica have completed the FVR. We also need an SME covenant (which comes straight out of the handbook) and names for Connectors.
- Laura Foughse from the Office of Vocations has told Judy Hare that we are good to go as an SME.
- Judy says the terms are fine and the position description is good except for a few words at the end.
- If we agree to go forward as an SME, we need to call a congregational meeting right away so that we can forward the documents to the PRC before its next meeting.

A discussion was held about the situation. Council members unanimously agreed to look for a candidate as an SME site. Alastair McFadden agreed to be a Connector, now that new and easier reporting forms have been approved. We are looking for one more person (perhaps Lesley McFadden, Karen Davies, or Megan Forsythe). The Search Committee will consist of Tara Bray, Dave Falkevitch, Debbie Johnston, and Dianne Kowalchuk. Council gave permission for informal letters to be written to various churches (Hamiota, Minnedosa, Knox in Brandon) about future collaborative arrangements. No changes were made to the three documents that had been circulated: position description, terms, and living faith story.

**Stewardship (Property):** Jamie McFadden reported the following:

- Please talk to Jamie before you change the toner in the printer.

- The snow in the parking area will eventually be cleared by the Town.

**Minister:** Alastair McFadden read Sheila's report on her activities in the first two months of 2024. A summary is provided below; the full report is attached to the official minutes.

- It was with deep sadness that I made the decision to not accept a call from Rivers United Church once I am ordained. I will be leaving at the end of June, where to, God hasn't let me know yet. I am filled with gratitude for the time I have spent here, this community of faith has been a wonderful learning site for my SME. ...
- I came back from my holiday January 8th. Many thanks to Tara for looking after the PCH service in January while I was away, and the one in February when I was sick. I have been covering for other ministers this winter while they were on holidays and grateful when they covered for me, thankful that there were no emergencies or funerals during these times.
- In February we had our annual meeting ... We again celebrated the restored windows and the endowment from Don McFadden's estate that covered the costs.
- Liturgically speaking, February was a busy month for me. We had a special Communion service celebrated on the Sunday school Sunday (February 25) so that the children could participate. Creating this Communion liturgy has been a goal of mine since I began seminary; thank you for helping make it a reality. I would love to hear your feed back on it! As well, on February 25, we had 2 members of the Brandon Bear Clan come and do a presentation during worship.
- Lent began in February, and with the encouragement of my LST, our Lenten services are based around a prayer bead practice. I have used this practice for many years; I first learnt it when I was studying to become a Licenced Lay Worship Leader. I led 2 workshops to introduce people to this practice and to make their own prayer bead fobs. We had two small, but wonderful groups, and we were able to make extra prayer bead fobs to give out to people who could not attend. As I look into March, we will end our Lenten journey at the very end of the month. March 24 is *Palm Sunday*; *Good Friday* service will be in our church; and *Easter Sunday* is March 31. Blessings as we journey to this holy time.

**\*\*Moved by Tara Bray, seconded by Alastair McFadden, that the reports be accepted. Carried.**

#### **Stewardship (Finance):**

The financial statement for the months of January and February 2024 were presented by Jamie McFadden. As of February 29, 2024, total RUC funds were \$217,561.42. Income for the period - \$12,084.20; expenses for the period - \$12,607.43. **\*\*Moved by Jamie McFadden, seconded by Dave Falkevitch, that the financial report for January and February 2024 be accepted for information only. Carried.** Monica asked about a \$40 transfer that had been received in the RUC account.

#### **Old Business:**

1. **Step 2 program:** Dianne reported that she had signed the agreement with the Assiniboine North Parent Child Coalition to host the Step 2 program from February through to the end of June. We have received the moneys. At the beginning of April and July, she will inform Monica as to the payments that need to be made. These sessions are held on certain Friday mornings.

#### **New Business:**

1. **Kids Club:** **\*\*Moved by Lynn Madden, seconded by Lori Kiesman, that Rivers Kids Club be given permission to carry out the requested upgrades in the basement: painting the walls and putting gyproc around the pillars. Carried.**
2. **Baptism:** **\*\*Moved by Tara Bray, seconded by Lori Kiesman, that RUC approve the baptism of Burke Allan McFadden, son of Alastair and Gabriela McFadden, on a date to be determined. Carried.**

3. **Thrift Sale:** Lynn Madden suggested dates for the spring thrift sale: Thursday, April 25 (1-8 pm); Friday, April 26 (9-5 pm); and Saturday, April 27 (9-1). These were accepted by consensus. Set-up will be Wednesday, April 24 at 7 pm. The items will be moved upstairs until after worship on April 21.
4. **Signing Officers:** **\*\*Moved by Tara Bray, seconded by Lori Kiesman, that signing officers for the Rivers United Church Westoba Credit Union account #8707523 be any two of Chair of Council (Heather Lamb), Vice-Chair (Alastair McFadden), Treasurer (Monica Madden), or Chair of Stewardship Committee (Jamie McFadden) and that Debbie Johnston be removed as signing officer. Carried.**
5. **Farewell:** A discussion took place about the best way to say good-bye to Sheila. It was decided that we will hold a Farewell Reception after worship on June 23. The Outreach Committee will make these arrangements. **\*\*Moved by Tara Bray, seconded by Jamie McFadden, that a certain item be purchased as our gift to Sheila Deforest. Carried.** Tara will look after this.
6. **Summer closing:** **\*\*Moved by Tara Bray, seconded by Lynn Madden, that Rivers United Church be closed from June 30 to September 1 inclusive. Carried.** Services will resume on September 8, 2024.
7. **Bear Clan:** **\*\*Moved by Tara Bray, seconded by Dave Falkevitch, that Rivers United Church make a donation of \$200 to Brandon Bear Clan. Carried.**
8. **Feasting on the Word:** Council discussed the recommendation of the Spiritual Leadership Committee to purchase the seven books of the *Feasting on the Word* series that we are missing for the use of our pulpit supply people. It was decided that we will first look to find used copies.
9. **Statistical Report:** It was noted that the 2023 Statistical Report was completed and submitted by Monica Madden and Dianne Kowalchuk.
10. **Congregational Meeting:** **\*\*Moved by Jamie McFadden, seconded by Alastair McFadden, that the congregational meeting for the approval of the Supervised Ministry Education site be held on Sunday, April 7, 2024, at 12:15 pm. Carried.**

**Next meeting:** **Tuesday, April 9, 2023.** Alastair McFadden will be in the chair.

The meeting was adjourned by Alastair McFadden, seconded by Dave Falkevitch. Rev. Kathy led us in a closing prayer.

### Dates

March 17- Service leader Heather Lamb  
 March 28- Choir practice at 6 pm; Maundy Thursday Service at St. James  
 March 29- Good Friday service  
 April 7- Service leader Alastair McFadden and Congregational meeting  
 April 9- Council meeting  
 April 14- Holy Humour Sunday? Baptism? Sunday school  
 April 18- Zoom workshop *Social Media in the Rural Church*  
 April 21- Communion  
 April 24- Thrift sale set-up  
 April 25-27 Thrift sale  
 May 12- Service leader Lesley McFadden Sunday school  
 May 14- Council meeting  
 June 9- Sundae Sunday and Sunday school  
 June 11- Council meeting  
 June 16- Service leader Rev. Glenna Beauchamp  
 June 23- Farewell Reception and last service before summer break